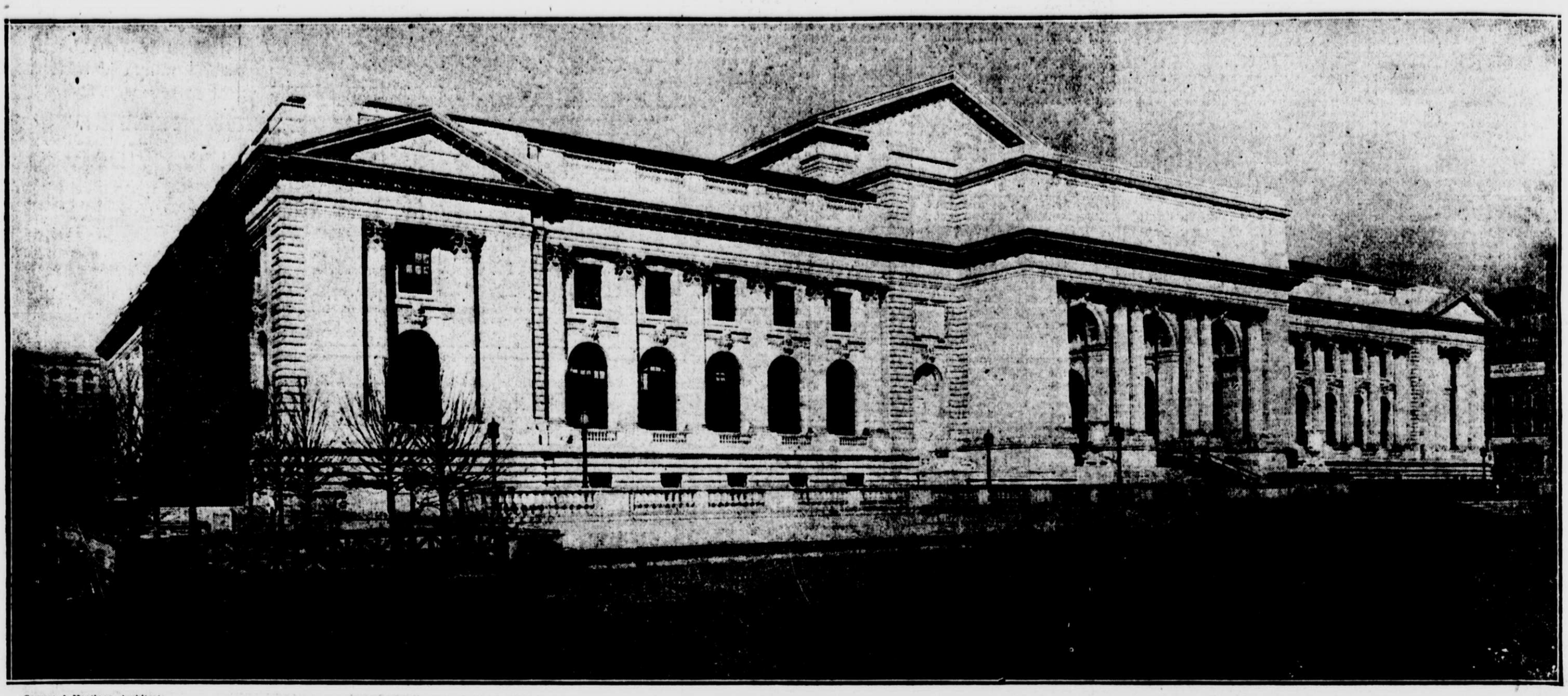
NEW YORK'S $8,000,000 PUBLIC LIBRARY

THE BUILDING ON FIFTH AVENUE NEARLY READY TO RECEIVE READERS



Carrere & Hastings, Architects.

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY.

The New York Public Library has gradually grown up before the eyes of the New Yorkers who are soon to be admitted to its privileges and it is already one of the best known buildings in this city. Its site makes it visible to the thousands who daily pass up and down Fifth avenue. Its architectural beauty makes it so different from the surrounding structures that it never fails to attract the notice of pedestrians.

Evidence of the widespread interest felt in the building has been afforded to the architects by the comments and correspondence that have followed every visible change in the structure. The case of the lions is in point.

Once they had been put in place, there was an outbreak of criticism in which opinions of the most varied character were uttered. The same thing occurred when the sculptures of Paul W. Bartlett were placed in the attic. When the two vases in front of the fountain niches appeared there was the same exhibition of popular interest in the appearance of the library. But E. C. Potter's sculptured lions probably came in for more decided expressions of like or dislike than any other part of the ornamentation, all of which was done in plaster and was put up merely to try its effect before the marble replicas were put into place.

The legends of the new institution are already comprehensive. Some of them are naturally comic.

"You see that old man with the gray beard?" asks the conductor of his gaping charges on the rubberneck wagon. "Well, that old man used to be an office boy when the building of the library was begun. And look at him now."

Of course the inspiration of this humor was the watchman. Jibes as to the length of time it had taken to erect the structure used to be common. It was difficult to make the public accept the explanation that it was practically impossible to spend more than a million dollars a year in putting up the building.

When Samuel J. Tilden died in 1886 the project to unite the Astor and Lenox libraries on one foundation seemed likely to be fulfilled through the fortune left to the city for educational purposes by Mr. Tilden. It took nine years to settle the legal complications arising over the will. Several of the Carnegie circulating libraries were associated with the Lenox and Astor in the new foundation, which was incorporated as the New York Public Library. The city agreed to provide a site for the institution and put up a building on condition that a circulating library should be part of the foundation and that the library should be open evenings, Sunday afternoons and holidays. With these conditions accepted the terms of the open competition among architects were announced and from the designs offered the best six were to be accepted. This competition was won by Carrère & Hastings on November 11, 1897.

In the meantime the site of the old reservoir had been secured for the library and in June, 1899, the work of removing this Egyptian memorial of old New York was begun. The foundations on which the present library stands were started in the spring of that year. Mayor Seth Low laid the cornerstone on November 10, 1902. Now, nine years later, the building is ready, with the exception of a few details, to be dedicated to the public.

Some statistics of the New York Public Library are necessary to a conception of the great scale on which the building has been erected. It is 390 feet long on Fifth avenue, from Fortieth to Forty-second street, and 270 feet deep from Fifth avenue. Leaving out the courtyard on the Fortieth street side of the building, it extends over an area of 115,000 feet.

The reading room, on the Bryant Park side of the building, is the largest apartment of the kind in the world. It is 295 feet long, 77 feet wide and 50 feet high. Beneath this reading room is the main stack room, divided into seven stories. The stack room is fitted with sixty-three miles of shelves, capable of holding 2,700,000 volumes. As other rooms for books are capable of holding about 800,000 volumes the library may house as many as three and a half million books.

In addition to the main reading room there are 200 smaller rooms meant for various purposes.

As a home for the valuable books it contains the new building is naturally fireproof. The book shelves are of bronze and this material with marble practically makes up the whole building. There is 375,000 cubic feet of marble in the library and wood is used only in the wainscoting of certain rooms.

The history of the New York Public Library is epitomized in the inscriptions that occupy the three spaces on the attic. On the left in the square space are the words "The Astor Library, founded by John Jacob Astor for the advancement of useful knowledge, 1848." On the centre space is the inscription "The Lenox Library, founded by James Lenox, dedicated to history, literature and the fine arts." On the right plaque is the inscription: "The Tilden Trust, Founded by Samuel Jones Tilden to serve the interests of science and popular education, 1888."

These three inscriptions were composed by Charles W. Eliot.

There are two niches on each side of the entrance intended for fountains. Within them are to stand statues by Frederick Macmonnies. One is described as "Beauty Overwhelming Ugliness" and the other as "Truth Overcoming Falsehood."

Corinthian columns decorate the piers of the building which end on the north and south sides in an adaptation of a classic pavilion. George Grey Barnard has done two figures called "Art" and "Science" for these pavilions. Between the Corinthian columns are rounded windows with square windows in the second floor.

On the attic the sculptures by Paul W. Bartlett stand for "Drama and Poetry" and "Religion and Romance," while the single figures at the end represent "History" and "Philosophy."

The main hallway, which all visitors from Fifth avenue first enter, is entirely of white marble, the ceiling being of the same material. White marble staircases at either end of this entrance hall lead to the upper floors.

On the south half of the front of the building and extending around the Fortieth street side are the administration offices of the library. On the part of the front of the library running toward the Forty-second street pavilion there are small reading rooms.

On Forty-second street there is the entrance for those who use the circulating library. This library is to be situated in the basement on the north side. At a corresponding point on the Fortieth street side there is the service entrance.

The reading room is 395 feet long, the whole length of the building at the rear; it is 50 feet high and over 75 feet wide. It is lighted naturally by fifteen long windows and at night eighteen Renaissance electroliers perform the same function.

Books of reference are to be had in this room. A wooden screen elaborately carved in the Renaissance style conceals the desks of the librarians and the lifts that bring the books up from the stack rooms. A gallery running about the room supplies additional space for books. The vaulted ceiling of this room is in green, blue and red.

Behind the blind top story of the library is a series of art galleries lighted from the top. The ceiling over the staircase has been decorated with an elaborate painting by James Finn.

Exclusive of the value of the land the cost of the new library is more than $8,000,000. The style may be described generally as Renaissance, although it has been adapted to American uses. The purpose of Carrère & Hastings in building the library in the style they did was to create something more than merely a building to use as a library. They planned also an edifice which may delight the eye. The new Public Library is intended as an evidence of the city's respect for architecture and beauty as well as a means to spread knowledge and learning.

Getting Out the Best There Is in Boys

Musicians, Athletes, Architects, Actors, Prizefighters, Students, Some of the Products of the Columbia Park Boys' Club of San Francisco

In San Francisco before the fire—dear is the phrase to the Western coast—Aleck Greggain ran a boxing club above a saloon at Sixth and Folsom streets. It was in that roaring zone south of Market street which is to the Golden Gate city as the East Side is to New York.

Boys flocked to Greggain and he taught them how to slug each other like boilermakers. Some were graduated as prizefighters. Some may now be seen of an evening supporting those lamp-posts, one of which the gifted Jimmy Britt said he'd rather be than the whole blamed city of New York.

Exactly a block away from Greggain's club is and was the Columbia Park Boys Club. There boys from the stock that Greggain moulded so adroitly were learning the music of Schubert and Wagner, grappling with architecture and mechanics, mastering the drama by giving two impromptu plays a day in their own small theatre and doing things in athletics far better than their pals over at Greggain's. Some of them have even become prizefighters. There's One Round Hogan, for instance, who, encountering his old Columbia Park mentor on the street a while ago, said:

"Yep, I'm fighting for a living, Mr. Peixotto, but don't take it too hard. I'm cutting the booze and the girls and saving money. You'll be proud of me yet maybe."

The Columbia Park Boys Club has come to be an institution as peculiar to California as the seals beyond the Cliff House, the caves of La Jolla, the Lick Observatory or the redwoods of the Big Basin. Now thirty-nine of the members and Sidney Peixotto, founder and head of the club, are in New York after working their way East by singing and playing and vaudeville since November 9. They had planned to go to Mexico, where a guarantee of $10,000 had been promised, but the insurrection quashed that and they headed instead for the Atlantic seaboard.

The real story of the Columbia Park Boys Club goes back to 1890, when Dr. Philip King Brown, a Harvard graduate and a Boston settlement worker, migrated to San Francisco and got Gelett Burgess, then a teacher of drawing in the University of California, to help him start the San Francisco Boys Club. It wasn't a project of settlement uplifters. Associated with the founders were Ernest Peixotto, artist; Frank Norris, novelist; Porter Garnett of the *Argonaut;* Loring Rixford, architect; Newton J. Tharp, now city architect of San Francisco, and Ernest Peixotto's brother Sidney. Presently Burgess made such a hit with his fantastic magazine the *Lark* that he came East to realize on it.

The club wasn't all that Sidney Peixotto thought it might be. He says now that it was too socialistic, that leadership was divided on the theory that each man was equally capable and it was enough if each gave his services one night a week. One day they told Sidney Peixotto that he was working too hard, whereupon he quit the club and founded another, the Columbia Park Boys Club, to which he has given his whole time since 1895.

His aim was to work out a system of his own that was new to California. He would dig deeper into boy nature than others had done and bring up nuggets of good that he believed lay in every street urchin of the Mission district. He would highly organize athletics and teach the boys trades in an ideal workshop where each could have individual attention. He would have them under his supervision in the summer also. He would persuade working boys to become schoolboys by taking the club on long summer trips which only schoolboys had time for.

Before the days of the club, Mr. Peixotto says, not a boy had studied beyond the grammar school in all that district of 100,000 population. In 1896 he got William Gleason to go to high school.

Willie prinked for the occasion and the neighbors' wives told Mrs. Gleason that she was making a "white collar bum" out of him. Mrs. Gleason, affrighted, tried to take him out of school. Mr. Peixotto worked to keep him in and succeeded. Now Gleason is head bookkeeper in a big packing house and bent on going higher.

Others, knowing that a South o' Market boy was barred from office work, had labored for $3 a week either at the "dinky," which is a glass factory, or in the box factories, which never turn an applicant away because so many folks are needed to make cases in which California's fruit is packed. Many of them, moved by the rise of Willie Gleason, joined the night classes of the Columbia Park Boys' Club and some even ventured into high school too.

Since then twelve graduates of the club have got degrees from the University of California, and according to Mr. Peixotto all that district of 100,000 persons has been stirred by the notion of education.

The other day Gelett Burgess was doubled up in a chair at the Players Club of New York reading. Along came a young man who said, "Why, hello, Mr. Burgess, do you remember me?"

The father of the "Goops" and limner of the purple cow confessed that he didn't seem to. Said the young man:

"I'm Ed Morrissey and was in the Columbia Park Boys Club when you were in San Francisco."

Then Mr. Burgess remembered. Morrissey was the club's prize actor. He was also the first boy the club sent to the university. At 24 he was stage manager of a No. 1 Clyde Fitch company.

Another club prodigy was Nat Schmulowitz. He also went to the University of California. There he wrote and played in the junior farce, and did the same for the senior farce that was put on last year in the university's Greek theatre.

Incidentally Mr. Peixotto says that in the eight years of the San Francisco Juvenile Court only two of the Columbia Park boys, from San Francisco's East Side, mind you, have been arraigned there. And there have been 4,000 boys in the club altogether.

"How do we do it?" says Mr. Peixotto. "Well, we aim at perfect boy happiness, and we do not find it hard to draw out the finest there is in his nature, which is pretty fine.

"Take music, for instance. The average boy worships a musician, yet you ask him if he can sing and he answers 'Naw.' We show him that he can. We teach him to use his beautiful treble.

"He is delighted and astonished. He may have never heard of the 'unattainable ideal,' but he knows that some incredible change has been wrought in him, and we've got him, body and soul, always after that.

"Then we show him that play does not mean just baseball. Each of our 220 boys must play an instrument. He finds that he can do that too. One hundred and ten of the members now rank as musicians. Most of the others would be if we could afford to buy more instruments. Such is our band.

"Then we have a chorus of forty boys who sing best and many soloists. They sing the best music that's written and are delighted to do it. We put that music into the boys so deep that they never can forget it, and music has its own way of making a better citizen of its possessor.

"In some ways our theatre is the most interesting thing about the club. Every day a teacher goes through the workshop and picks out six or seven boys, to whom he says: 'We want you for the show to-day.' When the group is assembled in a little room off the stage the teacher says—it's all impromptu, so nobody has to put in extra time studying:

"'I tell you what we'll have to-day, a scene in a churchyard. Two of you shall be tramps, so and so will be a ghost and the rest will take such and such parts. You, Jimmy Flynn, will say so and so, and you, Sol Levy, will say so and so, and we'll have the play end this way. Remember?'

"The boys answer yes, and the play begins with an audience of sixty members of the club. Every afternoon we have a new play and every evening it is repeated with a different cast, and a remarkable set of boy actors has been produced.

"Outsiders who come in can't believe that there has been no rehearsal, so quaint and spirited is the performance. It's one of our proudest traditions that the plays must be done just right."

A visitor to the manual training department, says Mr. Peixotto, finds it unlike such appendages of other boys' clubs. The art classes are particularly successful because of the emphasis placed on a boy copying a thing just as he sees it. Among other things they teach poster making, illuminating manuscripts and architecture.

The club also has a gymnasium and compulsory military drill. Every boy is taught parliamentary procedure, but Mr. Peixotto maintains that debating among boys is a failure by reason of their immaturity.

The long trips for which the club is celebrated on the Pacific coast grew out of the fact that Mr. Peixotto loves to walk. In his first year at Columbia Park he and three boys walked from Stockton to the Yosemite. The next year five did the same thing and the next year twelve.

"Even with no carfare to pay the cost was greater than the tourists could afford. Thereafter they resolved to pay their way by playing and acting and acrobatics that they had learned at the club. In the summer of 1902 thirty boys barnstormed from Eureka to Point Arena, 480 miles, tramping from town to town and giving a show every night, be their legs ever so tired, in whatever town hall or church would receive them.

"The next summer they walked all the way from San Francisco to Los Angeles, 550 miles. A band of twelve pieces with eight bugles and eight drums to boot scattered Columbia Park music all along the coast. When the boys took the train home from Los Angeles they had been away seven weeks, had visited parts of the State hidden to the Pullman sightseer and had made almost enough money to pay their fares back.

In 1910 one party of boys took in $4,500 on another Eureka trip. Another party went up to Seattle in a private car and almost paid their way. Each had a band and was prepared to put on a vaudeville show of fourteen acts at five minutes notice. Also each had a baseball team. The team of the delegation that went to Seattle played fourteen games with bush league grownups whom they challenged and won them all.

Mr. Peixotto says such expeditions supply the best training in self-reliance that he knows of. On the tramps every bit of the camp work—oh, yes, they sleep every night beneath a starry California sky that knows no summer rain—is scientifically shared.

"Teaching the art of working through play," Mr. Peixotto calls it.

The great Australian journey, from which the club's calendar of larks is now dated, began in May, 1909. The thirty-nine boys who made it were at sea two months. They visited Samoa, Tahiti and New Zealand on the outward trip and Fiji and Hawaii coming home. They traversed Australia from Sydney to Calgoordie in the western gold fields, 3,700 miles, by boat and rail. With vaudeville, band concerts, gymnastic exhibitions and football games they earned $25,000, which they needed, as the steamship fares alone were $11,000.

The Young Australian League, which invited them down, saw to it that they were entertained at Australian homes throughout the continent. At Sydney in July after a football match Lady Chelmsford descended to the field and presented to them a flag of New South Wales.

They won twenty-seven of thirty-eight football matches and gave their show in sixty cities and towns. It was nine months before San Francisco saw them again and began learning from them football as the Australians play it.

When in November last the Mexican trip had to be given up after thirty boys had been studying Spanish for many weeks the Santa Fé Railroad folks offered to take them to Chicago if they'd give concerts in eating houses along the way. So they came East.

They were in Chicago two months demonstrating Mr. Peixotto's idea of what a boys' club ought to be. Among their performances were twelve at the field houses of the city playgrounds.

Originally they had expected to go home from Chicago, but the pull of New York was irresistible. Starting eastward again with the hope of making their way as they had done before, they found Illinois and Indiana not quite as hospitable as California and Australia. At South Bend they had to turn back. In Chicago again they played three weeks in vaudeville theatres and came to New York on the proceeds.

They are here, Mr. Peixotto says, on the two well defined missions which have guided all their trips; for their own education and to give an object lesson more impressive than any lecture in the proper way to handle boys from the slums. They are staying at the Newsboys Home in New Chambers street with Mr. Peixotto.

Every night they give a concert for the newsboys, which is invariably followed by eager inquiry as to the chances of joining the club and being taken back to San Francisco. An uptown father whose son isn't at all a newsboy but who saw and heard the Columbia Park crew perform the other night has told Mr. Peixotto that he's going to send the youngster to California and let him live at the club for a year.

The Columbia Park boys expect to show off at some of the city boys' clubs and gymnasiums while they're here. They plan next to march on Boston and then Philadelphia. They may sail for England afterward, but so far that's only a vision which Sidney Peixotto is keeping as the only secret which he and his comrades do not share.

THOSE SAD OLD PLAYS

Which Theatregoers of a Generation Ago Thoroughly Enjoyed.

MACON, Mo., April 8.—The other day Manager Harry Logan of the Logan Theatre received this note, which was written in a girl's hand:

DEAR MR. LOGAN: Why don't you ever have a sad play any more? I go to your shows regular, and they always make you laugh, which is all right, but you don't want to laugh all the time. I like "East Lynn" and "The Two Orphans," and solemn shows sometimes, because people like to cry as well as laugh, don't you think?

Yours, A LOVER OF THE DRAMA.

Mr. Logan smiled as he showed the note and said:

"She—if it is a she—is voicing the sentiment of many years ago. I judge she is referring to theatrical troupes and not to the moving pictures.

"When I was with the Peyton company the serious plays were popular. Our repertoire was 'East Lynne,' 'Ten Nights in a Barroom,' 'Joshua Whitcomb,' 'Seth Swap,' 'The Two Orphans,' 'Hazel Kirke,' 'Fanchon the Cricket,' and several other plays I can't now recall. We would lead off with 'Seth Swap,' a funny piece.

"'East Lynne' would be the big event of the week and we always presented it Thursday night. I've seen handkerchiefs out all over the house when that was played. People would apparently enjoy a good old cry just as much as a hearty laugh.

"One night at Centreville a woman came near busting up the show by her excessive emotion. She boohooed as though she had just received a telegram announcing the sudden death of all her kin. It was such a display that the actors, who were trying to do a very affecting scene, got to snickering and the audience quit crying and began to giggle.

"The manager sent a man out to quiet the griefstricken woman. He approached her softly, touched her on the shoulder and gently remonstrated. She removed a watery handkerchief and turning her tear stained face toward him said she had paid 30 cents to get into the show and that she had thereby acquired the right to enjoy it in whatever way pleased her best and that she intended to cry as long and as loud as she felt like.

"The usher had no answer to that and he let her go on and enjoy herself without further remonstrance But it was tough on the actors.

"In those days, some twenty-five years ago, the week stand shows made a pot of money. There were no moving picture shows and the low prices of the répertoire shows took with the people.

"I played in the orchestra and had seen the performance so often that I knew nearly all the parts by heart. One night I told Mr. Peyton that I believed I knew *Seth Swap* as well as the man that played it. Peyton laughed and bet me a dollar I didn't. I took him up and he let me try the part. After the show he gave me a dollar. That was at Clarinda, Ia.

"All répertoire shows can play 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' if they have to, but don't often put it on except in cases of needing the wherewithal pretty bad. One week we started in on bad luck up in Iowa and when Wednesday came we decided to abandon the date: there didn't seem to be any chance of making good there. So we hurriedly billed three other towns for the remaining days in the week, and although we had no dogs or scenery for the play we gave 'em 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' and made a hit at each place.

"'Uncle Tom' was the actors' unfaltering friend in those days. If a show was hard up and didn't have any angel to draw on the manager would get out a railroad map and spot a few good 'Uncle Tom' towns, and he nearly always made good.

"I don't believe 'Tom' shows are doing much good in the West now, although the men running them insist they are. They don't amount to much here. The tendency of the times seems to be for something bright and sparkling, with plenty of action. The audience hasn't any patience with the working out of some complicated problem play.

"The men who produce plays follow the same theory that governs those who write for the up to date magazines. You can sell a funny story twice as quick as you can a sad one. Why? Because the editors have accurately gauged the wants of the readers of the United States and are trying as best they can to supply those wants. And the people that read magazines are of the same class that patronize the theatre. When there comes a demand for the weeping play there will be plenty of playwrights to turn on the stream—never fear."

"One of the sad old time plays was 'Marie Antoinette,'" remarked a gentleman who was in the theatre office with Mr. Logan. "I saw it at the Olympic Theatre, St. Louis, when I was a small boy, and the pain I suffered in seeing France's beautiful queen led to the scaffold in the presence of a howling mob has never left me.

"First, the executioner cut off the poor victim's beautiful hair and trod it ruthlessly under his heavy feet. History says she cut her hair herself; the play was more dramatic. The frowsy women were there with their hideous red caps, calling the beautiful woman from Austria all sorts of names; the executioner was an evil looking man, wearing a black eye mask and the drummers beat the Rogue's March as she ascended the steps to the guillotine.

"It was a very realistic scene and the curtain dropped as the queen's head by some mechanical device apparently fell into the basket. I was very much impressed with the play, but I don't believe I'd go to it again. There's plenty of worry over what happens in our time instead of shedding tears for those who suffered long before we were born.